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BRIEFLY / Europe

*** Soviet journalist disappears**

ROME — A Soviet journalist has disappeared while on a tour of Rome, a Soviet Embassy official said yesterday. He identified the missing journalist as Yuri Vereshigin, 45, who worked for the Moscow publication Gudok.

The Italian news agency ANSA said that Mr. Vereshigin dropped from sight Sunday while visiting the Pantheon with other members of the Soviet tour group and the Soviet Embassy filed a missing person's report with police.

Two years ago another Soviet journalist, Oleg Bitov, disappeared while in Venice and later turned up in London and was granted asylum. But he returned to Moscow saying he had been kidnapped by British agents while in Italy.

Last year a reputed KGB official, Vitaly Yurtchenko, also disappeared in Rome and turned up in Washington. He, too, later claimed he had been kidnapped and was returned to Moscow.